

# The god delusion debate with dawkins lennox



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The first main point argued by Dawkins is that the size and the complexity of the universe tempt us to think that there was a creator, a God. Science however, managed to emancipate us from explaining everything around us using the word God. Science works on answering question based on evidence. Religion uses faith to ignore the question and pushes it to God. He further argues that the only time faith comes into play is when there is no evidence.

Dawkins' second point states that the scientific method is the appropriate way to decide between atheism and Christianity. He explains that religion is about science and their claims are also considered to be scientific claims. He argues that science supports atheism. He backs this up by using a hypothetical situation in which if he was questioned in court by a lawyer as to whether the theory of evolution led him to atheism, he would answer yes.

The third point argues that it is very tempting to conclude that there is a designer who made the universe as it is because of its perfection. Religion uses God to evade the issue by saying God created it. He says that Darwin's theory of evolution shows us how complexity is explain through simplicity. Thus Darwin showed is that a ' garden' may not necessarily have a ' gardener' (God).

In his fourth point, Dawkins explains that religion teaches us to not question our faith and this prevents us from justifying our actions as long as it is in the name of God. He argues that having a faith justifies terrible acts because it allows us to avoid reasoning. Thus this explains the irrational act that was

done in the history of mankind. He also promote skepticism because it encourage us do not believe in anything without looking for evidence.

His fifth point states that religion is not the source of our morality. He argues that even if we take versus that suit us for a holy book, we still choose this versus with our own rationality. Therefore we dint need the holy book in the first place. He uses evolution to explain our lust for good deeds. He explains that there is somethng that is causing our moral consensus has shifted over decades. This shift is definitely not cause by religion this is because a religious scripture does not change over time where as our moral consensus do.

In his last point, he argued that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a minor issue and it is unworthy of the universe. He further explains that instead of the postulate that mankind is created in the image of God by God himself, all lives complexity can be explain by deriving it from simple beginning by comprehensible rational means.

## **2) What were the strengths and weaknesses of his arguments?**

During the debate Dawkins' argument about how mind boggling the sheer magnitude and complexity of the universe tempts us to worship a creator. He says that we translate the feeling of awe into a feeling to worship a God. He adds that it is easy to say than a designer tuned the universe. According to him, this says nothing and it is only using God to evade the issue. He showed that no matter how complex anything maybe, it does not necessary

need a designer. He proves this using Darwin's theory to explain something as complex as life.

Besides that, Dawkins also mention another important point which is that science has freed us from our desires to explain things to a creator. He describes that science works on answering question where as religion ignores the questions. He disagreed with the quote by Steven Jay Gould which basically states that religion and science do not overlap. He thinks that religion is about science and religious claims are scientific claims. The scientific thinking is the appropriate way to decide whether these claims are true. He even talked about scepticism which teaches us to seek for evidence rather than to blindly believe in something. This is parallel to the scientific method of describing our environment and nature.

Another strong argument conveyed by Dawkins was his opinion about faith. He thinks that faith only comes to play where there is no evidence. This can be seen during the debate when he said ' if faith is evidence based, then we wouldn't have to call it faith'. Moreover, he argues that when we implicitly believe in the faith, it permits us to act rationally; this is because the words faith can justify any act no matter how unreasonable or immoral it may be. This can be postulated when he said ' faith is a terrible weapon that justifies the terrible performance of terrible act'

Lastly, he argued that our morality is independent from religion. He states that if we think we require a god or a holy book to be moral, it means that we are deluded. When we pick versus that we feel suitable from a holy book, we are actually deciding on what our morality should be based on our

rationality. Thus, he argues that we do not need neither a holy book nor God in the first place. In the other cases, we have a religion only because of the fear of God or the fear of not going to heaven. These acts are not moral in the first place.

During the course of the debate, Dawkins showed several weaknesses. Among them is that he cannot convey his point about the thesis clearly. The evidence for this can be seen throughout the entire debate. In his first attempt to elaborate any of the six theses, he could not express his ideas in a straight forward manner. It is only in his reply where we can get a better idea of what he was trying to say.

Besides presentation, he also displayed weak arguments in the second thesis. The second thesis was 'science supports atheism and not Christianity'. His arguments were mainly about the quote given to him. The quote by Jerry Coyne states that the real debate was between rationalism and superstition. Science is but one form of rationalism and religion is the most common superstition. The next part of his argument was about the quote by Steven Jay Gould. As mentioned, the quote states that religion and science do not overlap. Dawkins explains why he disagrees with the quote and talk about the scientific method of solving a problem. However, throughout the second thesis, he did not explain why or how science supports atheism.

## **John Lennox**

For this paper, we have decided to choose John Lennox. We chose Lennox because personally, both of us are being brought up in a Christian family and

have indeed, always wanted to learn more about Christianity and its mystery of thousands of years.

**List down what were the 6 thesis they were debating. What were the main points of that debater and what evidences did he provide to support his main points?**

Faith is blind, Science is evidence based.

John Lennox argues that faith is not blind, at least not for Christian faith.

Christianity has its own evidence to support this claim.

Science supports atheism, not Christianity.

John Lennox disputes that the Holy Bible predicted the creation of the universe, and that only God could have created it.

The design is dead; otherwise one must explain who designed the designer.

God is too complex to explain and that He created the universe.

Christianity is dangerous.

Lennox disagrees and claims that one does not have to be religious in committing evil things. He said that the true teachings of Christianity does not promote violence but promotes love.

No one needs God to be moral.

Lennox argues that religion provides the foundation of what is morally right or wrong.

Christian claims about Jesus are not true. His alleged miracles violate the laws of nature.

Lennox says that one should treat others how he would like to be treated by others.

### **What were the strengths and weaknesses of his arguments?**

Throughout the whole debate, John Lennox has managed to present strong points with a touch of humour in it. His strengths were ultimately being able to give a good and convincing reply to whatever Richard Dawkins had to say. These strengths also managed to capture most of the audience's attentions and they seemed to respond better towards Lennox instead of Dawkins. For instance, on the topic of blind faith, in response to Dawkins, Lennox questioned Dawkins faith in his wife, in a joking manner; and true enough, Dawkins could not reply to the question. This is because Lennox has a very detailed knowledge about what the word " faith" represents, where as Dawkins does not. John Lennox also stated that the belief in atheism itself is a faith.

Besides that, another of Lennox's strengths is that he presented his arguments in a confident way. An example of this is when Lennox talked about the morality of humans. According to Dawkins, the moral values within a human are not embraced through a book; be it the Bible or the Koran, but rather through their own selves. He also claims that " there is something in the air" is driving us to be morally right, rather than just some holy book telling us to do so. Lennox then argued that " humans around the world show a common core of morality showing that we are made in the image of God".

He also says that what Dawkins meant was that ethics cannot be extracted from science, and there is no design, justice or purpose. In other words, Dawkins was saying that there was no such thing as good or evil, and that DNA which makes up of every human being doesn't know or cares, but rather, it was just there. Lennox then gave a strong argument that if Dawkins said that there was no such thing as good or evil, how can he be sure that Atheism was good, and Theism was evil?

Furthermore, another strength of Lennox was more prepared as the format of debate was in his favour. He fully utilized this to his advantage, by constantly questioning Dawkins. For example, when Dawkins said that "believing in Zeus was the same as not believing in God", Lennox simply answered that both Zeus and God had their own respective faith systems and Zeus is merely an idolized deity and does not exist, unlike God.

Unfortunately, this debate also encloses some of Lennox weaknesses. One of the weaknesses which Lennox possessed was that most of his arguments were opinion-based, rather than factual. This means that his arguments had not much evidence, but still was logically possible and rational. This can be easily distinguished when he said that "God was not created, but is eternal". Besides that, the second weakness of Lennox's argument is that religion is more towards to immateriality and theory, as compared to Dawkins' arguments which is mostly based on observations and findings to explain his points.



### **3) Debate with your classmates regarding who you think won the argument and why?**

After endless of deliberating and comparing, we are delighted to have finally matched our countless judgments and opinions to indicate a significant winner in this highly debatable dispute between Richard Dawkins and John Lennox. We unanimously think that John Lennox was the winner for this debate. There are several reasons to why we think Lennox was the definitive winner.

First and foremost, John Lennox is an intelligent man and he had obvious advantages throughout the deliberation. He was much more eloquent and well-spoken as compared to Richard Dawkins. Lennox was very direct in answering all of the questions and pointing out exactly where Dawkins was wandering away. For instance, during the 5th thesis, "No one needs God to be moral", was concerning about good and evil in the universe. Dawkins instantaneously started talking about how he attains at judgements of good and evil and went off on an angle just having to do with good and evil, but not how one justifies or discovers it from matter or energy. Lennox immediately distinguished where Dawkins broke any form of reasoning to decide on at his conclusions.

Furthermore, Lennox also seemed to be very accustomed with Dawkins' book, *The God Delusion*, as well as the people Dawkins would quote. For example, Dawkins had misused David Hume's quote in the connection of the laws of nature. John Lennox pointed out that Hume did not have the understanding of the laws of causes and effects, which served as the basis of

the laws of nature. Lennox quoted Hume, " You can't derive morality and ethics from matter and energy."

Last but not least, Lennox managed to counter Dawkins point on that faith was evil. Dawkins said that people who believe in faith are basically lazy because they tend to use faith to explain everything unexplainable in life. Lennox disproves this particular statement by Dawkins, stating that people do not believe blindly in faith but with evidences such as the Judeo-Christian Bible, history and personal experiences. This therefore, crashes Dawkins' point on the matter that faith is blind.

In conclusion, Lennox is the designated winner of this debate because he has truth and facts on his debate and managed to come up with good reasons behind them. The points given by Dawkins are weak as compared to of Lennox's points; therefore he was not the winner of this debate.